

M A R Y,
QUEEN OF SCOTS,

A
T R A G E D Y.

M A R Y
A. J. Smith

GOVERNMENT OF SCOTLAND

THE AGED

TO THE LORDS OF THE



THE AGED

THE AGED

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THE AGED

M A R Y,
H. Saint John (J.)
QUEEN OF SCOTS,

A
T R A G E D Y;

AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

By the Honourable JOHN ST. JOHN.

L O N D O N:

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M, DCC, LXXXIX.



TO THE

Honourable Mrs. BOUVERIE.

MADAM,

ALLOW me so far to trespass on that friendship, which has long been the honour and happiness of my life, as to entreat your permission to inscribe to you this Tragedy.—Your compliance with this request will be the more gratefully felt by me, from my knowledge of your disinclination to attract the public attention towards those many eminent qualities which you possess, and from a proper sense of the insignificance of my testimony to those merits which are known and acknowledged by the unanimous suffrage of the most brilliant society, and of the first characters in this country.—

DEDICATION.

Madam, as your acceptance of this dedication may, in some degree, imply your approbation of the performance, I cannot trust my pretensions to your favourable opinion solely to motives of friendship, however distinguished you are for that amiable quality; I have too high a respect for your taste and judgement, not to assert my *claim* and *title* to your indulgence on this occasion, which, in great measure, owes its origin to yourself; as I should neither have undertaken this attempt without your encouragement, or have offered it to the Theatre, where it has been honoured with so great an attendance, without your advice, in conjunction with that of many partial and indulgent friends.

M A D A M,

I have the honour to be,

With the highest esteem,

And most sincere regard,

Your very obedient friend,

And most humble servant,

JOHN ST. JOHN.

Carzon Street,
April 30, 1789.

ERRATA.

- Page 25, line 20, for *gloom's*, read *gloom*
30, line 16, for *whether*, read *whither*
50, line 11, for *cla* read *claim*
55, line 10, leave out the word *Royal*
59, line 9, for *dare*, read *date*

THE HISTORY OF

THE CITY OF BOSTON

FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT TO THE PRESENT TIME

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME THE FIRST

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P R O L O G U E.

Written by WILLIAM FAWKENER, Esq.

And spoken by Mr. WROUGHTON.

O F modern, Tragic Bards how few are found
Who dare to trust themselves on open ground!
In Fiction's fortresses they love to lie,
To coin their flimsy tales, and vainly try
To move your passions by an idle shew
Of fancied sorrows, and ideal woe:
To *Greece*, to *France*, to *Italy* they roam,
To lead you as they please, when far from home.
Our AUTHOR moves not from his native land;
Here in this LITTLE ISLE he takes his stand;
Convinc'd, of tragic, as of comic store,
No other nation ever yielded more;
And FRIEND to FREEDOM, he disdains the rules
And narrow precepts of the *foreign schools*.
No labour'd stratagem these scenes present;
No sudden change, or unprepar'd event;
With chaster art he writes not to the eyes,
Nor wou'd he stoop to win you by surprise;
Yet hopes, with names familiar to your ears,
To raise your horror, or draw down your tears.
'Tis true ELIZABETH's victorious hand
From Spanish tyrants sav'd the threatn'd land;
Wise were her Counsellors, her Warriors brave,
But she was WOMAN still, and Passion's slave.
Fam'd as she was for policy and arms,
She vainly claim'd *pre-eminence of charms*;
See her with jealousy now frantic grown,
Dread MARY's *smiles* far more than PHILIP's *frown*:

Is there amongst you, who, with stedfast eye,
Can MARY's sufferings view, nor heave one sigh?
From kinder skies, and from luxurious courts,
From tilts and tournaments, and feasts, and sports,
She came to govern (oh, too hard a part!)
A barbarous nation, and a tender heart;
And fell a victim in that fullen age,
To Faction's fury, and fanatic rage.
Oh! had she liv'd in more enlighten'd times,
When graces were not sins, nor talents crimes,
Admiring nations had confess'd her worth;
And SCOTLAND shone the ATHENS of the NORTH.
Too long hath virtue blush'd at MARY's name,
And justice slumber'd o'er her injur'd fame:
Truth to the heart at length shall force its way,
And reason justify the passions' sway.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

M E N.

<i>Duke of Norfolk,</i>	- - -	Mr. Kemble.
<i>Sir William Cecil,</i>	- - -	Mr. Aickin.
<i>Lord Herries,</i>	- - -	Mr. Barrymore.
<i>Davison,</i>	- - -	Mr. Packer.
<i>Earl of Shrewsbury,</i>	- - -	Mr. Benson.
<i>Earl of Huntingdon,</i>	- - -	Mr. Phillimore.
<i>Sir Amias Paulet,</i>	- - -	Mr. Fawcett.
<i>Beton,</i>	- - -	Mr. Williames.
<i>Nawe,</i>	- - -	Mr. Alfred.
<i>Lieutenant of the Tower,</i>	- - -	Mr. Lyons.
<i>Sheriff,</i>	- - -	Mr. Chaplin.

W O M E N.

<i>Queen Mary,</i>	- - -	Mrs. Siddons.
<i>Queen Elizabeth,</i>	- - -	Mrs. Ward.
<i>Lady Douglas,</i>	- - -	Mrs. Farmer.
<i>Lady Scrope</i>	- - -	Miss Tidswell.

MARY QUEEN of SCOTS.

A
T R A G E D Y.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The Gateway of Bolton Castle.

Enter Beton, who perceives Lord Herries arriving.

B E T O N.

SURE 'tis Lord Herries ! Oh, my noble friend !
How have we daily pray'd for your return !
Your royal mistress, from yon turrets height,
By hourly watch, hath strain'd her beauteous eyes,
Till gushing tears o'erwhelm'd her sight—But say,
What tidings bring you from the English Court ?

L O R D H E R R I E S.

Beton ! if faith, and zeal in a good cause,
Cou'd have secur'd success, it had been thine ;
Your claim of simple audience for a Queen
Was founded on a royal pledge. The ring

B

Which

2 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

Which grac'd your embassy, was sent with vows
To Mary from Elizabeth, that she wou'd aid
Her royal sister's cause — But, oh, good Beton!
It needs not our experience to foresee
The gulph 'twixt vows, and their accomplishment.

BETON.

But the result?

LORD HERRIES.

Evasions and chicane;
Base terms propos'd; then treacherous advice
That Mary shou'd in policy submit
To this strange trial; Heav'n forbid! until
She's heard in person.

BETON.

Still deny her presence?
Still urge these poor pretences! Grant our Queen
Were liable to imputations—Grant
Whate'er hate envy list—'twill but enforce
Her claim to face th' accuser.

LORD HERRIES

I shall entreat
Permission to revoke this rash appeal.

BETON.

Wou'd it were done! Our country is debas'd!
While our annointed Queen submits her cause
To foreign jurisdiction, and betrays
At once her own and Scotland's dignity.

LORD HERRIES.

Thus shall I urge; you know her spirit well;
Touch but that string, 'twill vibrate o'er her frame;
She has a soul that wakes at honour's voice,
Alive, with eager trembling at the sound,
She flies to its embrace; let shame approach;

Straight she recoils, and shrinks within herself;
No plant so sensitive, no shade so fleet.
May Heav'n still guard her! which way is the
Queen? [Exeunt.

SCENE II. *The Hall in Bolton Castle.*

Enter Lady Scrope, meeting Lady Douglas.

LADY SCROPE.

How fares my royal guest this morn, sweet maid?
You meet me on my accustom'd daily course
To attend your Queen, and wait her high com-
mands.

LADY DOUGLAS.

My gentle Lady Scrope, you are too kind;
Such courteous words but ill besuit the state
Of my poor fallen mistress—Rather say,
Is she secure? Who guards the castle gates?
Is ev'ry arrow-slit, and loop-hole watch'd?

LADY SCROPE.

Tax me not, Douglas! with severity—

LADY SCROPE.

'Tis but your duty, which you exercise
With tender feeling, and more true respect,
Than those at first deputed to receive her
With all the forms and pomp of royal state.
For, oh! what aggravating mockery!
Bows, smiles, and court-like phrases never sooth
The pangs of Princes in imprisonment.
But your high mind wou'd scorn to pay base court
By acts of rigour on the wretched.

4 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

LADY SCROPE.

Yes!

I know too well the dues of sovereignty :
While she is with me, under the Lord Scrope's
roof,
His wife, and Norfolk's sister, ne'er shall hear
A Queen's complaints with cold indifference.

LADY DOUGLAS.

Oh, nobly spoken ! worthy your great birth !
Oh ! how your sentiments and voice recall
Your brother's image ! would he now were here
For my poor mistress' sake—But see she comes.

Enter Mary.

LADY SCROPE.

May health and comfort to your Majesty
Return, with this propitious morn !

MARY.

Alas!

My noble hostess, your civility
Touches a grateful mind more pointedly ;
Is more affecting ; melts my spirits more
Than a less kind reception cou'd have done.
You owe not me this visit ; for I came
In strict obedience to your Queen's high will,
Under a promise from her royal self
That she wou'd meet me ere I shou'd arrive ;
But in her place, behold ! she sends her guards
To do me honour—Oh, my faithful maid !
You've seen me travel with a prouder suit ;
When all the gallant youth of France press'd on,
Led forward by the Princes of Lorrain,
Striving who foremost shou'd escort their Queen
From Paris to the sea—The gorgeous train
Sweeping

A TRAGEDY.

5

Sweeping along the plains of Picardy,
Like some bright comet in its pathless course,
Illumin'd all the country as it pass'd :
But what avail these thoughts ? for other scenes
I must behold—Yet, truly, this fair seat
Might well besit a royal residence,
And suits my fancy—but that I perceive
Some features in it which awake my mind
To strange misgivings—Wherefore, Lady Scrope,
Do centinels surround the battlements ?

LADY SCROPE.

Madam, be not alarm'd ; and rest assur'd
All comforts, honours, free access of friends,
And every privilege that can assuage
Misfortune, shall be found within these walls.
Seek then no rescue, nor attempt a flight.

MARY.

Flight ! said you, Lady Scrope ? I must not fly ?
Then there's no farther doubt—Ah, 'tis too plain !
I'm in confinement here ! a prisoner !
Oh, horrid word !—Oh, monstrous perfidy !
Oh, perjur'd, false Elizabeth ! Is this
The faith of England ? these the plighted vows
Of Queen to Queen ? the bond of sisterhood ?
And sacred rights of hospitality ?
If justice has not fled the earth and skies,
Requite it Heav'n ! Oh, my kind keeper ! now
No more my hostess ; you are merciful ;
Your kind indulgence mitigates my lot ;
Softens, and blunts the sharp edge of that hour,
The painful but short hour, that goes between
Th' imprisonment of Princes and their end :
You did assure me I shou'd see my friends ;
Your brother Norfolk is my dearest friend ;
Shall I ? ———

Enter

6 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

Enter Herries.

LADY SCROPE.

———Here's one to put me to the proof—
Heaven knows the issue; we'll retire and pray
For peace, and concord, amity and love.

[Exeunt Lady S. and Lady D.]

MARY.

Herries! my friend! companion of my flight!
Best counsellor who bade me shun this land,
What answer have you brought from this proud
Queen?

LORD HERRIES.

This is the purport: England's Queen declares,
That as a friend, and not a judge, she hears
This cause—Your restoration to atchieve,
If you renounce all title to her Crown,
During her life, and issue—Give up France;
Ally yourself with her; renounce the Mass.

MARY.

Heav'ns, what a height of insolence is this!
I see her aim; and now, no more, than this—
Will she in person hear her sister Queen?

LORD HERRIES.

She still declines to see you, till you're clear'd
Of this foul charge; which she herself abets,
Basely suborning forgeries; mean time,
Full of professions of sincerest love,
She waits impatient to embrace with joy
Her vindicated sister—But till then,
Most sanctimoniously abhors the sight
Of one, whose honour she herself betrays
By her false calumnies.

MARY.

A TRAGEDY.

7

MARY.

Perfidious wretch!

LORD HERRIES.

Know you that Murray, your base brother, dwells
At England's Court, consulted, closetted;
While you, a Queen, her equal in all points,
Are in a vile durance—

MARY.

Grant me patience, Heaven!

LORD HERRIES.

Were he your equal, why this preference
To him who shou'd plead guilty, not accuse?

MARY.

'Tis all mere mockery and artifice
To cheat the world, and gain its confidence
By semblance of fair justice.

LORD HERRIES.

Rather say

Plain, undisguis'd injustice: might I speak,
Your Majesty shou'd arrogate your right,
As a supreme and independent Queen.

MARY.

And yet my trusty guide! Can I recede;
Decline the enquiry; scorn the public voice;
Leave the licentious world to its own thoughts,
And my fair fame, a prey to wild conjecture?

LORD HERRIES.

The world's more just than to expect a Queen,
To plead to vassals in a foreign land;
Hold up her hand, and bend her knee to those
Whose proudest head, at sight of her approach,
Shou'd prostrate fall, and humbly kiss the dust.

MARY.

8 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

MARY.

And yet what other clearance can I have ?
Shall I sit down under this heavy load ?
Shall conscious innocence reject the means
Of wiping off this stain ? No ! I'll resign
All, but the first of titles, a fair name

LORD HERRIES.

'Tis not yourself, but Scotland you betray ;
Rights of a Sovereign realm, transmitted thro'
A hundred Kings ; rights which yourself were born,
And which you've sworn to uphold.

MARY.

Truth will prevail ;
Herries ! you may return to England's Queen :
Tell her I here recall my late appeal,
As all beneath my name and dignity.
Tell her I came invited to this land
By her fair words, and sought a refuge here ;
That refuge is a prison—then repeat
My wish in person to submit my cause ;
(Wherein I shew her honour and respect
Exceeding all example) If, at last,
This woman, so forgetful of herself,
Deaf to the claims of blood and royalty,
Against a sister shall make fast the door,
Admitting her accuser : let her know,
The Queen of Scotland claims her liberty ;
Demands her birthright ; nor will e'er resign
That freedom Heav'n and nature gave to all.
If this just suit's denied ; defy her then ;
Challenge her worst : dare her to keep me here ;
Bid her unhinge, and set at naught the laws
Of nature and of nations ; let her pride
Exult in barbarous disregard of right,
And emulate th' unlettered Turk and Moor,

Till

Till in one common cause, and with one voice,
All Christendom shall rise to rescue me.

[Exit Herries.]

Enter Norfolk.

NORFOLK.

Pardon this bold intrusion of your slave,
Whose steps are guided by resistless charms,
And every sentiment that purest love
Breathes in the hearts of her true votaries.

MARY.

Are you then come, brave, generous man! My
joy,
Norfolk! at sight of thee, dispels my fears:
Yet were it known you sought my presence here—

NORFOLK.

Is it then treason to approach these walls?
Must I presume your guilt, who, thro' this veil,
See your bright innocence?

MARY.

Heav'n knows 'tis such;
But circumvented thus by perjuries,
By bold bad men, what can a woman hope,
A helpless, unbefriended exile?

NORFOLK.

Oh!

Can'st thou pronounce those words and look on me?

MARY.

No! thou didst guard me from th' impending
wrath
Of Murray, that inhuman enemy.
Oh, thou hast lavished unrequited aid

C

Most

10 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

Most Angel like—Now first I feel my loss:
The fall of power ne'er wounds the breast so deep,
As when, from hearts that swell with gratitude,
It severs all the means of recompense.

NORFOLK.

What do I hear? No means of recompense?
Why what reward can Heav'n? a beauteous
Queen,

The paragon and envy of her sex,
The wonder and delight of all mankind;
Sent from the skies to dazzle all below
With rays too bright for mortal sight to bear.

MARY.

Terms such as these apply not to a wretch,
A poor, unfortunate, degraded wretch,
Doom'd to captivity.

NORFOLK.

Captivity!

It cannot, must not, shall not be; such acts
Are not within the reach of envy's grasp.
Cold-blooded tyrants may conceive such thoughts;
But, trust me, mankind is not yet so lost
To honour, decency, and gen'rous love;
The manners of the age, the face of things,
Wou'd not endure to see the pride of the age,
And all the living beauty of the world,
Led like a sacrifice to night and hell,
And buried quick—nay, in the bloom of youth;
And such a bloom as blasts the blushing rose
Of England's maids so fam'd—a form that mars
All other claim to grace or dignity.

MARY.

You mock me, sure!—Alas, what wou'd these
flights?

A TRAGEDY.

11

NORFOLK.

Yourself, and this fair hand; here on this earth
I ask, in one rash prayer, all Heav'n can grant.
[Kneeling.

MARY.

Let not despair, or confidence, take place;
Where fickle fortune reigns——

NORFOLK.

Oh, joyful words!
I am not to despair; hence, hence I date
All joys of life, and flat'ring hopes to come;
And dedicate all honour, service, love,
Henceforth, unto the mistress of my soul,

MARY.

Another mistress claims thy services,
A proud, inquisitive, revengeful Queen;
One full of envy; doom'd thro' life to feed
On gall, and spleen; nor taste love's generous
draught;
Watchful she is, and jealous in the extreme:
Beware how she's inform'd!

NORFOLK.

Why shou'd we fear?
Her ministers approve; proud Leicester's self,
Her favourite, will procure her full consent.

MARY.

Great minds are unsuspicious to their ruin;
Trust not to Leicester's words—Nor dream that she
Will loose these chains, and fasten hymen's bands,
For one she hates, fears, views with envious eyes.
Will she, so wise, join me to all your power?
It cannot be; prepare then for the worst;
And, if we fail, and I remain a slave,
Perhaps in faster chains, they shall but add

12 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

Fresh rivets to our love—This token keep !

[*Delivering a token.*

If closer walls await me, this may serve
To instruct some faithful servant of your name,
And of my wish for your access—Adieu !

NORFOLK.

Farewell, thou pattern of all excellence !

[*Exit Norfolk.*

MARY *sola.*

Now, Heav'ns ! as you regard our mortal cares,
If innocence claims mercy in your sight,
Expand your guardian wings, and cover me
From this black storm ! avert the dire approach
Of this too-subtil serpent's crooked pace
That glides to my destruction ! How have I
Deserved her venom ? Is it that I am young ?
Born to one Crown, and married to another ?
Or that, in me, she sees with jaundic'd eyes
Her lineal successor ? Aye ! there's the crime
Meanness cannot forgive—Poor narrow soul !
That wanting courage to submit to fate,
Seeks, like her father, to perpetuate
A mortal throne, and reign when she's no more :
There's no distemper so incurable
As thirst of power—Here then for life I'm fix'd,
Unless I work my way thro' walls of stone ;
Alas, these hands are weak ! But I'll find some
Shall tear up by the roots these thick-ribb'd towers ;
I'll from my dungeon scream, till to my cries
All Europe echoes—Norfolk ! thou shalt rouze
That insuppressive spirit of this isle,
Which hates injustice, succours innocence,
Appals the tyrant, and protects the oppress'd.

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE I. WHITEHALL.

Elizabeth seated on her Throne, attended by her Court and Guards.

Enter Cecil.

ELIZABETH.

CECIL, your haste tells me you bring advice
Of the result of this day's conference
On Mary's cause.—

CECIL.

My liege, the conference
By Norfolk, your own delegate, this hour
Is suddenly dissolved.—The partial Duke,
When Herries claim'd an audience for his Queen,
Dismiss'd the Court, and justified the claim.

ELIZABETH.

Mary will never be in want of friends
While Norfolk lives.—

CECIL.

And how long that may be,
I know not; but can never wish long life
To England's foes.—

ELIZABETH.

Of Norfolk say you that?

CECIL.

14 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

CECIL.

Not as a charge direct, of any crime
Within the grasp of law : but when a Duke
So highly honour'd by his Queen, shall plot
In state affairs—

ELIZABETH.

What mean these hints ? Explain.

[Descending from her Throne,

CECIL.

The Duke arrives from Bolton, the Lord Scropes.

ELIZABETH.

Indeed ! I own the visit was ill tim'd,

CECIL.

Or flow'd it purely from fraternal love ?

ELIZABETH.

Why, Cecil, you delight in dark surmise !
Norfolk's an open undesigning man ;
His friendships and dislikes are all avow'd.

CECIL.

Soft clay takes deep impresson—Flexible
To any shape, is moulded easily ;
And facil, honest minds, when caught by love,
Exchange their native qualities for those
Which suit their new designs.—

ELIZABETH.

Speak you of love ?

CECIL.

Aye, mutual, in all its forms declar'd ;
Close correspondence.—

ELIZABETH.

Oh, accursed news !
Oh, all-seducing harlot !—Wanton wretch !

Can

Can none escape the fascinating looks
 Of this attracting basilisk? must she——
 Cecil! this instant issue my commands
 For closer custody; seek Shrewsbury;
 Tell him to take her from the Lady Scrope,
 Her Norfolk's sister, and from Bolton, straight
 Proceed to Tutbury's strong fortress: there
 Let her be guarded safe—begone—no stop—
 Cecil, be sure you do not trifle here.
 I would not have your wary character
 Blemish'd, by joining in the babling cry
 Of every politic officious knave,
 Seeking reward for premature reports:—
 What proof have you of this?

CECIL.

Ere long compleat;
 Till then, my faithful word; but let not haste
 Mar the discovery.—Plots there are besides
 Of blacker die, not flowing from the Duke,
 But from the restless spirit of the church,
 Whose midnight conclave brooding in the dark,
 Devises stratagems and massacres
 For those who break her fetters.—

ELIZABETH.

Now dispatch,
 Use all your zeal—forget not Shrewsbury.

[Exit Cecil.]

[Sola.] The events begin to multiply, which tend
 All to my point—This close imprisonment
 Will now be sanctified in peoples eyes.
 I'll spread the fame of this conspiracy;
 But for the Duke's intrigue there needs no haste;
 As yet 'tis in the bud, and may lie hid
 Till farther light shall ripen and expand
 Its native colours.—Here he comes at length.

Enter

Enter Norfolk.

NORFOLK.

I fear I'm come full late; tho' not the last
In love and duty to my gracious Queen.

ELIZABETH.

My Lord, we know your fame for loyalty;
For honour, justice, generosity;
We think ourselves have not been wanting yet,
In owning and rewarding your deserts;
Nor can we doubt your faith and gratitude.

NORFOLK.

Forbid it Heaven that there should be just cause!

ELIZABETH.

Norfolk, you are our first commissioner.—

NORFOLK.

As such, I trust I've not disgrac'd my charge,
Or England's justice.—

ELIZABETH.

You are not accus'd;
Think not we wish for blind subserviency
In th' exercise of such a trust; but say
Frankly, what colour wears this wondrous cause?

NORFOLK.

On Mary's side fair as her beauteous front.—

ELIZABETH.

How! to my face? [*aside.*]

My Lord, you never speak
But from the heart; such frankness pleases me,
And much becomes your family and name;
Which, in good truth, I wish were well secur'd
In the right line; your noble wife, my Lord,
Hath

Hath lately left us to lament her loss;
 You should repair it: who wou'd not be proud
 To boast of Norfolk's heart? Why not aspire
 To ask a royal hand?—The Queen of Scots
 Is not, I guess, displeasing in your sight.

NORFOLK.

Aspire to gain the Queen of Scots? shall I,
 So highly countenanced by your good grace,
 Court one in bondage, fallen, and accus'd?

ELIZABETH.

Is, then, a diadem so small a prize?

NORFOLK.

Pardon me, Madam, if I have no wish
 To wed a prisoner.—Gods, when I reflect
 On all the comforts I enjoy at home,
 How can I wish to seek a land of strife;
 And purchase, at the price of wealth and ease,
 A barren sceptre and a fruitless crown?

ELIZABETH.

Then England boasts a peer who scorns the match?

NORFOLK.

Such are the gifts of bounteous Providence,
 Such my condition in my native land,
 That when surrounded by the numerous throng
 Of my retainers, at my plenteous board,
 Or in the crouded field at country sports,
 I, your liege subject, sometimes rate myself
 As high as many princes.—

Enter Davison.

DAVISON.

Madam, I come
 From the Earl of Leicester, who, by illness seiz'd,
 D Despairs

18 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

Despairs of life, yet frequently repeats
Your royal name, and seems as if he wish'd
T' impart some weighty matter.—

ELIZABETH.

Say I'll come. [*Exit Dav.*
[*Afide.*] So Leicefter has some secret to divulge
Upon his death bed, tho' I trust to Heav'n
He doth not yet upon his death bed lie!—
[*Addressed to Norfolk.*] And on what pillow Nor-
folk lays his head,
Let him beware!— [*Exit Eliz.*

NORFOLK, *solus.*

What may this caution mean?
Beware what pillow! Ha! why more is meant:
I mark'd her cold, dry looks, her pregnant sneers;
All is not well—surely she has not heard—
She has, and I'm undone—all confidence,
All faith is rotten—Leicefter is my friend;
But who knows what in sickness he'll confess?
Somehow I am betray'd: 'Tis Cecil sure;
The prying, penetrating Cecil, ay!
He at a glance views all this busy world,
And reads our very hearts. I'll to him straight.
[*Exit Norfolk.*

SCENE II. *Enter Cecil, meeting Lord
Herries in haste.*

CECIL.

Whither so fast, my Lord?

HERRIES.

No matter, Sir,
If far from regions whence all faith is flown,
All reverence to royal rights—

CECIL.

A TRAGEDY.

49

CECIL.

How's this?

HERRIES.

England's no more a civiliz'd estate :
The savage Afric tyrant may expose
His subject's liberty to public sale,
Seize, bind, and sell the human race like beasts,
Mow down their heads like thistles in the path ;
He is untutor'd ; yet not more than you,
Barbarian, reckless of all faith and law.

CECIL.

What breach of law ? what wrongful judgement's
this ?

HERRIES.

None : for you cannot, dare not judge our Queen.
Why is she then detain'd ? Curse on this land
' And all its savage race, your cursed shores,
' Plac'd like a trap to intercept the course
' And passage of the sea, had well nigh caught
' My Mistress on her way : ' Henceforth what sail
Will not, thro' rocks and sands, avoid your coast ?
Soon as the mariner shall from afar
Descry your hated cliffs, tho' spent with toil,
Consum'd with sickness, and distress'd for food,
He'll turn his leaky vessel, and escape
The seat of treacherous Circe's cruel reign.
Yet, ere I go, mark this, the hour's at hand
When foreign vengeance shall dismay your isle,
Scare all its coasts, and make its center shake
At sight of such a buoyant armament,
As never press'd the bosom of the main.
Beware !

[Exit Herries.

CECIL, *solas.*

Aye ; and in spite of thee, proud Scot !

D 2

Let

20 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

Let Scotland, France, and Spain blow up the storm,

I'll weather it, if no sinister wind,
No inland gust, o'erset me suddenly:
Mary's secure; and Norfolk's shallow brains
Are wrapt in dreams of vanity and love;
His plots I find have yet no farther scope.

[Exit Cecil.]

SCENE III. Elizabeth entering her Chamber with the Lieutenant of the Tower.

ELIZABETH.

Lieutenant, now you've had your orders, haste!

LIEUTENANT.

The Duke is still below—I'll guard him well.

[Exit Lieut.]

ELIZABETH, *sola*.

So! this design is riper than I thought:
Leicester informs me that the contract's sign'd.
The tower is now the fittest residence
For this intriguing Lord, who thinks to mix
The stateman's and the lover's part unseen.

Enter Cecil, throwing himself at Elizabeth's Feet.

CECIL.

Most gracious Queen! thus at your royal feet
I crave a boon. E'en as I enter'd now,
The Duke was seiz'd; oh, yet suspend your wrath!

ELIZABETH.

Can Cecil plead for Norfolk? Rise! and say,
What means this double aspect? this quick change?
This anguish heat and cold? Your steady mind,

Which

Which us'd to point the safest road, now veers,
Turns, like the shifting vane, at every blast.

CECIL.

When have these eyes e'er view'd your enemies
But with an even, stedfast look of hate?

ELIZABETH.

Why, Cecil! are not all the Catholics
United in this cause? th' ambassadors
Of France and Spain haunt me from morn to night
With their petitions for this captive Queen.

CECIL.

Yet Norfolk's neither Catholic nor foe;
Vouchsafe to hear him!—

ELIZABETH.

Since you are so prompt
In his defence;—who waits? [*Enter Attendant.*]
Call in the Duke. [*Exit Attendant.*]

CECIL.

Had he designs against your government
I ne'er had sued for him; but he, poor dupe!
Intent on his vain-glorious enterprise,
Aim'd at no farther harm: and to be plain,
He is so popular, that 'tis not safe
To keep his person long in custody—
But here he comes.—

Enter Norfolk, throwing himself at Elizabeth's Feet.

NORFOLK.

My Mistress! Oh, my Queen!
Here let me, prostrate on this ground, assert
My faith and loyalty!

ELIZA-

ELIZABETH.

You may arise ;

'Tis done already : honest Cecil prov'd
Your plots were not design'd against ourselves.

NORFOLK.

Tho' justice is of right, yet he who feels
Not thankful for't, betrays a narrow mind,
Forgets the general pravity of man,
Nor prizes virtues for their rarity.

ELIZABETH.

Norfolk, attend ! this caution now remains ;
What falls from high should deep impression make ;
Beware how you take part in Mary's cause !
Remember this forgiveness, and engage,
That henceforth you'll give over these attempts.

NORFOLK.

This act of justice claims my solemn vow.

ELIZABETH.

Cecil, attend us—

[Exit Eliz.]

CECIL.

Norfolk, this escape
Should serve to warn you from this idle chace ;
Now seek some other fair—take her to wife ;
Fly not at game so high ; the faulcon's safe
Who for the lesser quarry scuds the plain,
But if he's struck, tow'ring to chase the hern,
He falls to rise no more——

[Exit Cecil.]

NORFOLK, *solus*.

So ! this wise man
Thus condescends to waste his thoughts on me !
Advice is easier given than pursued.—
It is no trifling task to quit at once
All that makes life engaging, all I love !—

What

What have I promis'd? Heavens, I dread to think!
 Yet it must be! for when did Norfolk e'er
 Infringe his word? Nay, to his Queen, his kind
 Indulgent Mistress—What! for mercy sue,
 And break the fair conditions of the grant?
 The very thought's a crime—Nature may change;
 All creatures may their elements forsake;
 The universe dissolve and burst its bonds;
 Time may engender contrarities,
 And bring forth miracles—but none like this,
 That I should break my word—I'll to my love,
 Lament our fate, and take my last farewell.

ACT

A C T III.

SCENE I. *Before Tutbury Castle.*

Enter the Earl of Shrewsbury and Beton.

B E T O N.

I AM charg'd with royal thanks to Shrewsbury
For his humanity and gentleness.

S H R E W S B U R Y.

Alas, good Beton! 'tis a grievous task
Thus to confine a Queen—Humanity,
Where 'tis so due, claims less acknowledgment.
I am enjoyn'd to keep her close, because
The neighbourhood abounds with Catholics.
I was in search of Bagot, the High Sheriff,
With orders on that point—

B E T O N.

I learn from him
That the Earl of Huntingdon will soon arrive;
I fear his furly, proud, imperious mind
Will bring no comfort to my Mistress here.

S H R E W S B U R Y.

You know he claims succession to the Crown
Before the Queen of Scots; this strange conceit
May swell his native pride and violence
With envious malice—but I'll temper it
By all the indulgences and gentle means
Our rigid orders suffer—Now farewell.

I

SCENE

SCENE II. Tutbury Castle, Mary's Chamber—Mary and Lady Douglas discovered.

MARY.

No, not another tear! our fate's decreed;
 Our lot is cast; here in this sad abode,
 E'en here we may enjoy a dread repose—
 Better by far than the tumultuous throbb
 Of my poor aching heart, while yet it dreamt
 Of liberty and visionary crowns,
 Whene'er I slumber'd, mock'd my troubled fight.
 Here then, at last, in these dark, silent dens,
 We shall be proof against anxiety,
 And feverous expectation's agonies.

LADY DOUGLAS.

My royal Mistress, still there is hope, though this
 May seem the mansion of despair; so cold,
 So comfortless, and fit for scenes of woe;
 Such deep, low, winding vaults; such towers aloft
 Impending o'er their base, like broken cliffs
 Whose shapeless, weather-beaten summits hang
 In rude excrescence, threat'ning instant fall:
 Perhaps, in each of them some wretch pent up,
 Lives here, suspended between heaven and earth—

MARY.

I like these dismal cells; this awful gloom's
 Congenial to my soul—each yawning cave
 Looks like the entrance to the shades of death,
 And promises oblivion of this world.
 Rude as this castle is, here held his state
 Old John of Gaunt; hither flock'd all the pride
 Of chivalry; around the lifts sat all
 The beauties of the Court; each Knight in arms,
 Intent to catch a glance from some bright eye,

E

Exulting

26 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

Exulting in her champion's victory :
Our eyes are now to other uses doom'd ;
To read and weep by turns—Alas, my dear !
Your pretty eyes are far too young and bright
To waste their lustre on these fights of woe.

LADY DOUGLAS.

Lose not a thought on me ! while I behold
My royal Mistress' face, my heart's at rest :
Not all the gayities and bravery
Which once you say these walls were witness to,
Have charms for me ; 'tis all I ask, to sit
Long, wintry, sleepless nights, and cheer awhile
The heavy hours that hang around your head.—

MARY.

Heavens ! how have I deserv'd such kindness ? No !
This must not be ; you must depart, my girl ;
Fly quickly, shun this seat of wretchedness ;
For else, who knows but you may be involv'd
In that sad fate which hourly threatens me ?
Oh ! 'tis a sorry sight to see thee sit
At meals with me, who never can ensure
One morsel at our scanty board, from fear
Of deadly poison : fly ere 'tis too late ;
The prelude of imprisonment is short ;
Soon, very soon, we must expect to hear
Th' assassins wary step, fix'd on his point,
Yet trembling still with horror and remorse,
And faltering in the deed—Ah ! who comes
here ?

Enter Shrewsbury.

SHREWSBURY.

Madam ! it grieves me that my presence here
Shou'd give you such alarm ; I hoped, that if

In any point I varied from my trust,
'Twas not in cruelty—

MARY.

Oh, no, my Lord!
Far otherwise; 'twas somewhat else, indeed;
Perhaps an idle fear; at least while you
Continue in your charge—

SHREWSBURY.

If I remain—

MARY.

Why there's no doubt, I hope?—

SHREWSBURY.

None: but report
Now adds the name of Huntingdon—

MARY.

Alas!

Why is that monster sent? Are there no racks
Or torturing engines made to plague mankind?
No! I defy all art to find a tool
So fit for her ingenious cruelty;
The sharpest instruments which tyrants use
Can ne'er impart such pain, as the blunt edge
Of that unpolish'd fool's impertinence.

SHREWSBURY.

I shall not fail to enforce all due respect.

MARY.

'Tis vain to preach civility to brutes.
These tidings quite oppress my sinking soul.
Now I've no comfort left; my Douglas! now
You and I shall no longer sit all day,
Consoling one another's miseries,
Telling old stories to beguile the time,

28 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

Of things that pass'd, when I was queen, and you
The brightest jewel in my Court.

LADY DOUGLAS.

Indeed

We have a kind of melancholy joy
Indulging in our grief.

SHREWSBURY.

For that, alas!

I bring fresh food——

MARY.

How so?

SHREWSBURY.

This hour I learn

A strange account of some conspiracy
Detected at Whitehall; wherein your name
Was join'd with Norfolk's, who, with other Lords,
Stands now committed to the Tower.

MARY.

Ha, me!

Merciful Heav'n! What say'st thou, Shrewsbury?
Is Norfolk in the Tower on my account?
Recal those words! Oh, they shot thro' my brain
Like light'ning! Say you do not believe them,
man!

Speak, prythee! Oh, you hesitate! I'm lost!
He's gone! I see the cruel lions
Has seiz'd the noble hart; he bleeds beneath
Her horrid fangs. [*Leaning on Lady Douglas.*]

LADY DOUGLAS.

Alas! her memory fails;
Excuse this transient weakness, Sir, in one
So cruelly oppress'd, and made the sport
Of cross and wayward fortune.

SHREWS-

SHREWSBURY.

Why this haste?

Enter Nawe hastily.

N A W E.

This moment brings a messenger, who tells
That Norfolk, Pembroke, Lumley, Arundel,
Each to his several dungeon was confined
For Norfolk's treason; that, on farther proof,
The Duke was clear'd; who now, restored to grace,
Lives in full splendour, fame, and liberty.

SHREWSBURY.

Look to the Queen! She faints.

*[Here Mary having changed from horror to joy,
faints and falls into Lady Douglas's arms.]*

L A D Y D O U G L A S.

Help! help!

SHREWSBURY.

Who waits?

Enter Mary's attendants.

Convey her softly: Thus, alas! she's dead
[They carry her to a couch.]

L A D Y D O U G L A S.

My Mistress! Oh my Mistress! Oh my Queen!
She breathes! she breathes! yet there is life, oh,
Heav'ns!

SHREWSBURY.

Patience awhile!

L A D Y D O U G L A S.

Be silent all I pray!

Her

30 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

Her troubled spirit must not be disturb'd;
These shocks have stop'd the current of her blood;
And nature seeks a momentary pause:
Excessive joy succeeding grief so quick
Now o'erwhelms her mind; but balmy sleep,
With tears that make the drowning tide to ebb,
Will ease the load that weighs upon her heart.

SHREWSBURY.

Give her repose awhile, and watch her well.

*[Exeunt, leaving Mary asleep surrounded by
Lady Douglass and her maids.]*

SCENE III. Before Tutbury Castle.

Enter Beton and Nawe.

N A W E.

I trust the Queen will soon regain her strength.

B E T O N.

No doubt if this were all; but still I fear
Farther vicissitudes—The crazy times
Are big with strange events; each teeming hour
Is fruitful of new mischief—Who goes there?

Enter Norfolk in disguise.

N O R F O L K.

One born to freedom, and not bound to tell—
Whether he comes or goes——

N A W E.

What wou'd you here?

B E T O N.

Let's take him to the Governor——

N O R-

A TRAGEDY.

31

NORFOLK.

Villains,

Stand off———

BETON.

No Villains serve the Queen of Scots;
Learn that, base ruffian——

[They draw their swords and seize Norfolk.]

NORFOLK.

Hold, are you the Queen's?
Serve your Queen Mary? then a word with you:
Know you this signet?

NAWE.

Ha! the token sure!

BETON.

The very token! 'tis the Duke!

NORFOLK.

My friends!

BETON.

No more; this is a dangerous place; retire
Below the drawbridge, to that sally-port,
Half choak'd with ruins; there wait patiently,
Till we can execute the Queen's commands.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV. *Mary discovered on her Couch, surrounded by Lady Douglas and her Maids.*

MARY.

Am I awake? Methinks the clouds disperse;
A watry gleam of light breaks thro' the mist;
“The tepid funbeams play, and 'gin to shed
“Their all-enlight'ning vivifying rays,”

“To

32 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

To cheer the world, and dissipate its gloom ;
 All nature seems restored—" My gentle maids,
 " Have you been with me whilst I slept? No
 doubt ;
 " For I have dreamt I was in Heav'n; and you
 " Were surely the fair angels that I saw
 " Surrounding me in bliss"—Douglas ! I think
 The last word that I heard was liberty :
 Norfolk is set at liberty ?

LADY DOUGLAS.

No doubt ;
 That was the purport of our joyful news.

MARY.

Then I'm alive again, my hopes and all ;
 Once more I'll dream of comfort, and indulge
 Each fond delusion ;—I shall see my love ;
 He'll soon be here ;—Norfolk won't tarry long.

Shrewsbury and Huntingdon entering.

SHREWSBURY.

Gently, my Lord ! perhaps the Queen's at rest.

HUNTINGDON.

We must use all dispatch.

SHREWSBURY.

Awhile ! My Lord !——
 Madam ! the Earl of Huntingdon, who is joined
 In trust with me——

[Presenting Lord Huntingdon to the Queen.]

MARY.

[Aside.] Alas ! are these my dreams
 Of joy and comfort ? My Lords, I still rely
 On your humanity and gentleness.

HUN-

A TRAGEDY.

33

HUNTINGDON.

Our first instruction is to hold her safe.

[Turning to Shrewsbury.]

SHREWSBURY.

Aye, but in that beware how we transgress
The bounds of mercy; mercy is the due
Of all who breathe on England's soil; it grows
From the same root, and is entwined around
The sceptre of our Queen; we are to her
Subjects and Servants.

MARY.

I am neither, Lords!
I am, like her, a Queen; nor will consent
To take as mercy, what I claim as right,
Justice and liberty.

HUNTINGDON.

This is no time
For such high strains; learn your condition here,

MARY.

Is this a language suited to your birth?

HUNTINGDON.

High birth is ne'er disgrac'd by truth, I hope;
And for my tongue, 'twere better fail in that,
Than use my hands to perpetrate such deeds
As Queens have sometimes done.

SHREWSBURY.

Oh! shame; such words,
If they were true——

HUNTINGDON.

Talk not of words! I come
To execute my orders—First, 'tis said,

F

This

34 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

This castle, till of late, was us'd to hold
The county prisoners.

LADY DOUGLAS.

How ! wou'd you place a Queen—
A lady form'd in nature's fairest mould,
Rear'd like the tenderest plant, shaped by each
grace,
Each exquisite last touch of polish'd art,
Among a tribe of felons ?

SHREWSBURY.

What ! immur'd
With all the refuse of the human race,
The outcasts of the earth ?

HUNTINGDON.

My Lord ! I know
My duty ; sure you have forgot the charge.
Who are all these that make the prison shew
More like a royal court ?

[*Pointing at Mary's attendants.*]

MARY.

Mean, abject slave !

HUNTINGDON.

I here dismiss one half of this same train :
Begone ! [*To the attendants.*]

MARY.

No, stop ! inhuman wretch, forbear !
On me direct your vengeance—let not these
Poor helpless maids be driven from their home,
Tho' 'tis a poor disconsolate abode :
For still they wait with pleasure on their Queen,
Proud to participate in all her woes :

But

But these are sentiments thou can'st not feel,
Go, ask your mistress, whether such a train
Is all too proud to attend upon the Crowns
Of France and Scotland? ask what retinue
I shou'd have deem'd becoming her estate
With me, at Paris, or at Holyrood?

HUNTINGDON.

Those days are past—without more idle words,
There's one condition, and but one, by which
You may be nobly entertain'd, and have
All freedom and respect—Give up your Crown;
Confirm Earl Murray Regent; and reside
In England with your Son——

MARY.

No more! perform
The part that suits thee, jailor!—Thou lack'st wit
To tempt me to resign my native Crown;
To sacrifice at once myself, and son;
And, make the world believe I own her charge.
No! I prefer her dungeons—Death itself.

HUNTINGDON.

Then be it so! Attendants follow me;
Leave her to ruminate in solitude.

[Exit Shrewsbury and Huntingdon, with the attendants following reluctantly.]

MARY. *Sola.*

Give up my Crown; my son; support my foe,
My mortal, base, unnatural enemy.
'Tis a plain challenge to a Queen—Resign
'All sense of honour, claims of birth, all thoughts
'Of eminence in early youth imbib'd,
'And grown habitual, to those whom chance
'Has in derision deck'd with mortal crowns;
'Or else prepare, and summon fortitude

36 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

' To brave the threats of power, the taunts, the
' scorn,

' The worst indignities that envy breeds ;

' That bitterest produce of the meanest plant

' That grows in mortal breasts — Perhaps still
' more ;

Perhaps her iron hand may rend these limbs ;

This cruel wretch, this Huntingdon, is sent

To view my torments with unalter'd eyes ;

To fit, preside, direct the torturer's knife,

Glutting his greedy soul with scenes of blood,

While dying shrieks are music to his ears.

' 'Tis hard for female spirits to bear up,

' And stand the fiery trial—Ah ! who's that ?

Spare me !

Enter Norfolk in disguise.

NORFOLK.

Oh, fear me not, my life ! 'tis I ;

'Tis Norfolk at your feet.

MARY.

Oh, Heavens ! once more

Save my poor intellects ! Oh, Norfolk, oh !

My guardian angel ! How shall I relate

All that befel me since ? Yet rather say,

How have you 'scap'd the jaws of that fell tygress ?

How got you hither ?

NORFOLK.

By the gift you gave ;

Your token known, they straight conducted me,

By secret ways, thro' these old walls, and thus

These eyes at once are dazzled with a sight

Dangerous to look on—

MARY.

MARY.

Danger is no more
When my brave Norfolk's come; we'll talk of
love,
Of future bliss, and paint gay scenes of joy,
Counting our happy days before their time.

NORFOLK.

Alas! that's all, I fear, we e'er can hope.

MARY.

Let not your noble spirit, Norfolk, fail!

NORFOLK.

Spirit will fail when reason cannot hope.

MARY.

Norfolk cannot despond in Mary's cause.

NORFOLK.

Oh, think no more of such a worthless wretch;
A base, mean villain, traitor to my Queen.

MARY.

Is love for me such treason in her sight?

NORFOLK.

My treason is not 'gainst my lawful Queen,
But against her, to whom I'm bound by ties
Dearer than dull cold duty——

MARY.

Mean you me?
Doubtless you made confession of your love;
Was that a treason against me? 'twas great,
Worthy yourself; magnanimous to scorn
Her utmost rage, and brave her dire revenge.

NOR-

NORFOLK, [*Afide.*]

How shall I wound her gen'rous, noble heart?

‘ Her, whose pure mind, whose unaspicious
‘ thoughts

• Dress up my fins in virtuous robes ; thereby

• But making them more hideous in my fight;

‘And me more hateful to myself.’—Oh, fool!

That cou'd be brought to purchase this vile life,
By quitting all that's dear to me on earth !

MARY.

What do I hear? Oh, say not so, my love!

You are not capable of such a thought.

N O R F O L K.

Alas, I've pledg'd my word; I've fworn to it.

M A R Y.

Extorted vows are void, mere idle breath.

NORFOLK.

Mine have not been so hitherto—an oath,
A sacred oath——

M A R Y.

Had I no oath from you?

NORFOLK, [*Aside.*]

Ah ! there's the dreadful maze, the double road,
Where each path leads to ruin and disgrace.

MARY.

Oh, Norfolk, do not leave me! do not forsake

Your poor, forlorn, and faithful prisoner;

Already loft to all the world but thee ;

My only comfort, refuge under Heav'n.

Oh, 'twou'd belie the tenor of your life :

What wou'd I not for thee? Let all the Kings,

The

The rival Princes that have woo'd in vain,
Here in my prison recommence their suit;
Wou'd I not spurn them all for thee? Yet fly;
I'm lost; but you are born to better fates.

NORFOLK, [*Aside.*]

Be firm, my soul! Oh, torture!

MARY.

Cruel man!

To cast me off because I'm here confin'd:
What sent me hither but my love for thee?
When last I saw you, then you were a man,
Replete with courage, gentleness, and love.
What have I done to change your nature thus?
If I'm in fault, strike at this wretched heart;
Let it not break! Or leave me to my fate,
To chains and dungeons, insults and hard words;
Let savage Huntington dismiss my train——

NORFOLK.

The horror of my crimes comes thick upon me,
Cou'd I then leave thee thus, a prey to grief?
The sport of ruffian tongues? Why did not Heav'n
Blast with its lightning, and benumb these limbs,
So slow in striving to break ope the gates
Of this accursed cell? Oh, foul disgrace!
Where shall I 'scape the pointing hand of shame?
Here let me sue for pardon—All I ask,
Is to devote my life to rescue thee;
To stem the torrent, and oppose the flood,
Defy the deluge of o'erwhelming fate,
And snatch thee from the waves of misery.

MARY.

Are you then still my Norfolk? Do I dream?

NOR-

NORFOLK.

No, while there's life in this poor frame, and
while——

MARY.

Enough, my Norfolk ! I am the debtor now :
Your noble resolution doth restore
The genial current of my frozen blood ;
The blood of many hundred Kings doth rise
To chase despondency, and swell my soul
With thoughts of nobler deeds, and times to come.
Mary shall once more triumph in her turn.

NORFOLK.

Then farewell, beautiful and injur'd saint !
Good angels hover round this dark abode,
And guard you till the cries of honour's voice
Shake these old battlements, and rend this roof ;
Burst wide these bars, and once more charm the
world
With radiant light of matchless beauty's beams.
Adieu, my love !

MARY.

Remember me—Farewel !

ACT

A TRAGEDY.

A C T IV.

SCENE I. WHITEHALL.

Enter Elizabeth and Cecil.

ELIZABETH.

CECIL! what more? the Duke, you say, is secur'd.

CECIL.

Aye! beyond 'scape, my liege!—He's on his way;
Perhaps has reach'd the Tower.

ELIZABETH.

Sir, he may thank
Your intercession for that liberty
Which prov'd his bane.

CECIL.

Reproaches from my Queen,
So just, fall like the chastisement of Heav'n
On those it favours.

ELIZABETH.

Heav'n favours none
But those who see their errors, and repent.

CECIL.

If I repent me not the part I took,
May I be sharer in his punishment.

G

ELIZA-

42 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

ELIZABETH.

We know your faith ; 'twas error, we're convinc'd ;
Let affiduity atone for it ;
Probe this infernal plot.

CECIL.

'Tis done ! Behold
This train of correspondence, 'twixt the Duke,
The Pope, the Queen of Scots.

ELIZABETH.

The treason is clear :
Cecil, my foes are numerous and strong.

CECIL.

Were they in number as the summer leaves,
Their autumn doth approach ; they soon shall fall,
Blasted, and driven by the wind.

ELIZABETH.

This day
One falls at least ; this faithless Lord no more
Shall dupe me with his promises ; let him
Await his doom—' yet stay ! his birth and name—

CECIL.

' Are but fresh motives for example sake.

ELIZABETH.

' Then be it so

CECIL.

' And her Ambassador,
' Who wou'd have forc'd the Tower, and seized
yourself ?

ELIZABETH.

' That must be nicely weigh'd ; for sovereignty,
6 ' Aye,

‘ Aye, but the shadow of it, claims regard :
 ‘ Tis not for us to extinguish hastily
 ‘ That emanation from the royal light ;
 ‘ Altho’ the source from whence it springs may
 seem
 ‘ Somewhat obscur’d and clouded

‘ CECIL.

But if threats
 ‘ Produce confession, we may learn to guard
 ‘ ‘Gainst farther harm.’

ELIZABETH.

Proceed.

[Exit Cecil.

He needs no spur ;

Nay, he anticipates my inmost thoughts.

Th’ ambitious Duke’s dispos’d of ; such half-
 pac’d,

Soft, scrupulous fools, make poor conspirators.

Mary yet lives : but for the Ambassadors,

I shou’d have sent her cross the Tweed ere now,

To Murray’s care : I wou’d it had been done,

When first she threw herself into my hands ;

It seem’d a consummation of success,

A period to my cares : but now this prize,

This precious prize, so unexpectedly

Entangled in my toils, proves a fierce snake

Which I can neither safely hold, or loose ;

While yet I have her in my grasp, she slips,

Twining her folds around my limbs—Alas !

I live in fear of my own prisoner,

And tremble on my Throne.

[Exit Eliz.

SCENE II. *Enter Davison to Cecil.*

DAVISON.

The fatal order’s sent ; e’en now the Duke
 Prepares for death.

G 2

CECIL.

44 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

CECIL.

Oh, Davison! these times
Demand dispatch; patience must have its bounds,
Or change its nature, and degenerate
To dangerous weakness.

DAVISON.

Yet the piteous fall
Of this beloved, generous Duke, will rend
The hearts of all his countrymen: the streets
Are throng'd with weeping multitudes; and groans
Betray more deep-felt sorrow than the tongue
Dares, in these days, to utter.

CECIL.

Such esteem,
And general sympathy, denote his sway
And empire o'er the affections of the land;
And thou'd have served to other ends than strife,
For the romantic honour and renown
Of, liberating helpless captive Queens. [Exeunt.

SCENE III. *The Tower.*

Norfolk and the Lieutenant discovered.

NORFOLK.

No, good Lieutenant; I am at a point,
The very point, and summit of my path,
Up life's steep rough ascent; and now must leap
The dreadful precipice.

LIEUTENANT.

Yet still, my Lord,
There's room for mercy; and if fame speaks true,
Good

Good cause for it. 'Tis said your Grace did save
Her Majesty's own person from assault.

NORFOLK.

As I'm a Christian man, and doom'd to die,
'Tis true; and never have I aught devis'd
Against her sacred self; but 'tis in vain
To sue for mercy; nor is it my wish
To ask that mercy which I've once abus'd.
Cou'd I but, during this sad interval,
Cou'd I but send one——

[Enter a servant delivering a paper to the Lieutenant.]

Ha! what's that I see?

LIEUTENANT, [Reading.]

Alas!——

NORFOLK.

Enough! I read it in your looks:
My hour is come——

LIEUTENANT.

My Lord, the guards attend.

Enter Sheriff and Guards.

NORFOLK.

I am content, thank Heav'n, to meet my fate;
Not from indifference to life, or claim
To innocence; far otherwise in both:
But knowing mercy's infinite extent,
I cast the world behind me—One farewell!
And then——

SHERIFF.

My Lord, in truth, we may not wait—

NOR-

46 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

NORFOLK.

I go—and, good Lieutenant, tell the Queen
That he who lately stood in highest rank,
(Now sunk below the meanest citizen)
Tho' he's pronounc'd a traitor by his Peers,
Whom yet he blames not, still appeals to Heav'n
In his last moments, that there lives not one
More true to his religion, country, Queen,
Than dying Thomas Howard—Then implore
Her kind compassion to my orphan babes.
Say that my dying words were, "Peace be with her!"
And as I am the first to fall by the axe,
So may I be the last, in her blest reign!
May she do justice, and protect th' oppress'd!
So may her fame reach all posterity!
And by her hand, do thou, oh, gracious Heav'n!
Build up the walls of England!

SHERIFF.

Alas! My Lord!
Delay is at our peril, we beseech—

NORFOLK.

A little moment! I had something yet —
But let it pass! here! here! it rests; while yet
Life's current flows, while yet my nerves perform
Their functions—Mary! I must think on thee!
Bless thee with my last breath: may Heav'n afford
That succour which this mortal arm in vain
Attempted! may'st thou never feel such pangs
As he who dies for thee! and now, e'en now,
Flies with impatience from this hell to seek
A refuge in the cold embrace of death. —
Lead on! — Oh, Mary! Mary! Mary!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

SCENE IV. WHITEHALL.

Enter Elizabeth and Cecil.

ELIZABETH.

Cecil! our last commands have been perform'd?

CECIL.

Madam, they have.—

ELIZABETH.

And how behav'd the Duke?

CECIL.

With manly, decent constancy; and seem'd
Most penitent in that he broke his word;
But still disclaiming fully all designs
Against your crown and person; at the last,
His parting soul seem'd bent on his own fate
Less than on Mary's——

ELIZABETH. [*Afide.*]

How! how's this! intent
On her at last? must her attractions reach
E'en to the very brink of death? alas!
That each progressive circumstance of woe,
Tends but to prove the power of her charms.

CECIL.

' Her minister, the Bishop, hath confess'd
' His share of guilt, and open'd all the plot
' 'Twixt him and Alva—Philip and the Pope.

ELIZABETH.

' Then bid him instantly depart my realm,
' If he beholds to-morrow's setting sun
' On English ground, his privilege is gone,
' He dies a traitor's death—and from his Queen,
' No

48 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

' No more ambassadors I'll entertain ;
' Or risk my life to grace my prisoner.

CECIL.

' The French King's minister, of late, is grown
' Importunate for fresh indulgences ;
' That she may be allowed to take the air,
' With fit attire and decent retinue :
' All this is ask'd of grace ; not as a part
' Of Anjou's marriage treaty.

ELIZABETH.

' If that serve
' T' amuse and hood-wink France, she'll think no
' more
' On Mary.'—Davison ! what brings thee thus ?

Enter Davison.

DAVISON.

Dispatches from your Minister in France.

ELIZABETH.

Of weighty matter ?

DAVISON.

Heavier far, and worse
Than mortal ears can bear ; Heav'n guard us all
From such disasters as no tongue can tell !
A visitation which the world, till now,
Ne'er saw or heard of.

ELIZABETH.

Speak ! no more delay.

DAVISON.

Then hear the fate of all our friends in France,
Swept from the face of th' earth, exterminate,
In one black night, at one infernal blow

Dealt

Dealt by the hand of Rome ; there scarcely lives
A protestant to tell the massacre.

ELIZABETH and CECIL.

The massacre !

DAVISON.

I said the word : the tale
Runs thus :—That signals from the Louvre top
Proclaim'd the time of slaughter ; Paris first,
And 'tis suppos'd, within an hour, that all
The cities of that kingdom stream'd with blood.
Nor age, nor sex was spar'd ; old men, nay babes,
Fast in their helpless mothers' arms, were pierc'd
With the same weapon ; sick men in their beds,
Brave warriors in their sleep, were butcher'd : one,
One only check'd their course—The first who fell,
Brave Coligni, whose very name appals
The bigot's heart—At sight of his grey locks,
So known where'er the thickest battle rag'd,
They stood aghast, till one more harden'd wretch,
With eyes averted, stabb'd him to the heart.

ELIZABETH.

Oh ! let me shed one tear for that great man !

DAVISON.

' Marshals of France, and Bishops led the band,
' Invoking Heav'n, yet calling out for blood ;
' And, oh ! eternal infamy, the King
' Look'd on, encourag'd, nay imbru'd his hands,
' His sacred hands, in his own subjects' blood :
' Pointing his carabine at those who fled
' Apart, like stricken deer—while he, in sport,
' At his balcony revell'd, 'midst a throng
' Of ladies, praising his dexterity,
' Taught, like himself, by his more cruel mother,
' From early youth, to jest at homicide.

H

ELIZA-

50 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

ELIZABETH.

' No more, the tale's too dreadful, I'll retire.'
May Heav'n preserve my people from this curse!
War, famine, pestilence, are trifles all
Compar'd to this corruption of the mind,
This degradation of humanity.
I'll to my closet; let none dare approach;
No cares of state presume to interrupt
My holy solitude.—— [Exit Elizabeth.

DAVISON.

The Queen's retir'd
Most opportunely, for I've that to tell,
Which to no ear but thine——

CECIL.

What, Davison!
Hast thou, that can the least attention claim,
After thy dreadful tale?

DAVISON.

That which demands
All your dispatch, prudence, activity,
The Queen's in danger, and each hour lost
Appears an age, ruffians there are——

CECIL.

How's this?
Her life in danger? say by whom; and how?

DAVISON.

' These ruffians came from Rheims, a seminary
' Intoxicated with th' omnipotence
' Of papal power, and Rome's accurs'd decrees,
' Thinking that if they perish'd in th' attempt,
' They gain'd a glorious crown of martyrdom.
' This motley crew, compos'd of soldiers, priests
' Of various orders, mad enthusiasts,
' So confident in their iniquity,
' Cast lots for weapons; then in full career

' Of

‘ Of riot, ’midst their cups, for frolick sake,
‘ Were painted in one portrait, each with th’ arms
‘ That fell to him by lot’.—These villains all
Are seiz’d.

CECIL.

‘ Can you no further trace the plot ?
‘ Are you so slack a friend ? till now I thought
‘ That if you gain’d the clue your zeal would soon
‘ Tread back the windings of the labyrinth,
‘ And from her dark recess drag forth to light
‘ This forcerefs.

DAVISON.

‘ Mistrust not yet that zeal ;
 ‘ Behold this fruit of it.’—These lines I’ve gain’d
[*Delivering Letters.*]
 From Gifford, a corrupt, abandon’d priest,
 Who sold his fellow traitors—these are said
 To be the writing of Queen Mary’s hand ;
 And whether true———

CECIL.

Enough ! they strongly bear
The semblance—now 'tis done—thanks, Davison !
I'll to the Queen, nor heed her prohibition.

[Cecil knocks at the closet door, Elizabeth enters from thence.]

ELIZABETH.

Who dares with sacrilegious steps approach
And intervene betwixt his sovereign's pray'rs,
And Heav'n's impending vengeance on our race?

CECIL.

'Twas not without just cause —

ELIZABETH.

No cause, I trust,
Warrants plain disobedience of my word,
My strict commands—S.r!—

CECIL.

Madam, these events
Brook no delay.—

52 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

ELIZABETH.

Events! why what events?
Canst thou add flames to Ætna's raging fire?
Imagination can no sequel find
Worthy the tale he told.

CECIL.

This hour Davison
Fears for your royal self.

ELIZABETH.

Speak, Davison!

DAVISON.

— I trust
All will be well, for the conspirators
Are almost all secur'd.

ELIZABETH.

Conspirators!

DAVISON.

Aye, most inveterate, 'implacable!
' Hell never sent such fiends to curse mankind,
' Taught by religious zeal to emulate,
' Nay to contest the prize of parricide.

ELIZABETH.

' You say they are secur'd?

CECIL.

' Know you their names?

DAVISON.

' Their chief is Babington; a youth whose zeal
' For Mary springs from a distemper'd brain,
' Inflam'd by love.'—And more 'tis fully prov'd
That Mary's in the league.

CECIL

CECIL.

— An associate
In this conspiracy.

ELIZABETH.

Remove her straight
From gentle Shrewsbury's care to Fotheringay.
Let her no more be treated as a Queen.

[Exit Davison.]

Cecil, am I not just? why to what length
Will she abuse my patience?

CECIL.

How many crimes
Which now disgrace the annals of the world
Owe their existence to false clemency,
And weak procrastination? She must die;
Or, you, a willing sacrifice, must yield
Your life to save her.

ELIZABETH.

Mean you, that thro' fear,
I shou'd assume her part, and basely turn
Assassin?

CECIL.

Heaven forbid! are we then sunk
Below the level of the pagan world?
For they have justice; Justice is the right
Of all beneath the sun; and shall not you,
The source and fountain of it, be allow'd
What you dispense to all? Are royal lives
Worth less than those of subjects? or is she,
This mighty captive, paramount to laws,
Divine and human?

ELIZABETH.

Whither tends this theme?

CECIL.

54 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

CECIL.

To justice ; to the fair impartial course
Of justice——

ELIZABETH.

Cecil ! you forget yourself,
And her whom you address : Is this your zeal,
Your reverence for royalty ? What law
Can render her amenable to me ?

CECIL.

Nature has laws ; instinct, alike to all,
Promulgates them—‘ Assassination needs
‘ No human statutes to declare its guilt ;
‘ They are but feeble, artificial props,
‘ The patch work of society, which serve
‘ Only to swell the catalogue of crimes,
‘ By inefficient sanguinary means.’
Thank Heav’n no mortal is exempt from law
Who shall attempt the life of England’s Queen.

ELIZABETH.

Aye, in this island ; but the general voice
Of Europe wou’d cry shame !—Presumptuous
man !
No more—Let not your forwardness o’erstep
The bounds of our forbearance, nor abuse
Your sovereign’s ear with base suggestions ; cease !

Enter Davison

What fresh disaster now ? hate, fear, and death,
Revolt, and treason, mark thy ominous steps.

DAVISON.

No prince was ever more belov’d and fear’d ;
Your people in one bond associated
Join to defend your life, and, with one voice,
Call

Call for immediate justice on her head,
Whose life is incompatible with yours—

ELIZABETH.

For that alternative, if that were all,
Freely I'd pardon all her injuries :
But for my people's sake, it cannot be :
Heav'n has entrusted them, and their true faith,
To my defence.

DAVISON.

Our lives, religion, all !
Grant, oh ! grant justice !

ELIZABETH.

Have I not sworn to it,
When I succeeded to th' imperial Crown ?
You have our leave, our (Royal) warrant, Davison.
[Exit Davison.]

[Aside.] Heav'ns, what have I pronounc'd ! I dare
not think !

Then I must act, and leave slow timorous thought ;
This is no time for scruples and remorse.
Cecil, 'tis done ! since nothing but her blood
Can satisfy your thirsty souls——

CECIL.

My liege,
Your grateful people will applaud the deed ;
Bless the defender of their faith.

ELIZABETH.

'Tis false ;
The universal world will curse the deed ;
All future ages execrate the name
Of her who brought anointed royalty
To such disgrace : yet there is time—who waits ?

Enter

Enter Servant.

Fly quickly; call back Davison—Alas!

[Exit Servant.]

Alas, poor Queen! Cruel, perfidious man!
Your baneful counsel prompted me to this.

Enter Davison.

Oh, are you come? — Davison! I recal
The horrid sentence——

CECIL.

Such are now the thanks,
And ever were, of those who weakly strive
To save a Prince determin'd on his fall.
Madam! since, inattentive to my prayers,
You thus devote yourself—let me retire
Unaccessary to your fate.

ELIZABETH.

Cecil!

I must not lose your service.

CECIL.

Why should I
Stay to endure that vengeance, which will fall
On all your Ministers, when Mary's plots
Rob England of her Queen?

DAVISON.

Till that's atchiev'd,
She'll never rest; her object is your Crown.
Has she renounced her claim? No; to this hour
She sometimes boasts her title to your Throne,
As confidently as she us'd in France,
When she, with her first husband's fleurs de lys,
Quarter'd the arms of England.

ELIZA-

A TRAGEDY.

57

ELIZABETH.

That, indeed——
That was an early pledge ; with her first milk
She drank the seeds of hate ; still, as she grew,
Th' inveterate poison spread ; and now she pours,
Full in my bosom, all the venomous store.

CECIL.

Oh, 'tis not mercy, it is cruelty
To spare her, when the safety of your realm
Hangs on her fate ; what if her voice shou'd pierce
The prison walls, and thro' the nation sound
A signal for a second massacre ?

ELIZABETH.

Ah, there is the word ! that word recalls my mind,
Chills all my blood, and drives its current back.
Heav'n doth exact a sacrifice to those
Who fell for our true faith : 'tis Heav'n's decree—
It is resolv'd—She dies—Fly, Davison !
Outstrip the winds, and with the winged speed
Of lightning, let the thunder-bolt of Heav'n
Strike her devoted head !—Away ! Away !

[*Exeunt*]

I

ACT

A C T V.

SCENE I. FOTHERINGAY CASTLE.

Enter Lady Douglas and Beton.

LADY DOUGLAS.

BETON, alas! you prophecy too well;
Each moment brings some melancholy proof
Of your forboding spirit.—

BETON.

Cou'd I doubt
The consequence of such facility?
You know how oft and earnestly I urg'd
The danger of submission; but to plead,
A Queen, in her own person, thus to plead!—

LADY DOUGLAS.

Had she not pleaded, this pre-judging Court,
As by confession, had pronounc'd her doom.
And yet, cou'd she suspect that such a list
Of all the great nobility, such names,
The warriors, heroes, patriots of the land,
Cou'd so disgracefully be led to join
In concert to her ruin?—

BETON.

Oh! too oft
Servile compliances are brought about
By joining numbers and great names, where none,
No single, worthy individual

Would

Would show his face, or lend his honest fame.
Know you what urg'd her to appear in court?

LADY DOUGLAS.

'Twas to defend her honour that she came,
In all the majesty of innocence;
Descending from a throne, she offer'd up
Her dignity, a willing sacrifice,
To her fair fame; impell'd by conscious pride,
That inward pride which purity of mind
Inspires, and prompts to dare corruption's art,
To face, upon unequal terms, the wiles
Of perjur'd treachery.—Oh! 'twas a fight
New to the world; so strange, that mortal eyes
Their credit lost; none who beheld, believed;
But, Beton, such a mockery as this
Can ne'er be realiz'd?—

BETON.

Oh, surely not;
'Tis but an artifice to justify
Past cruelties; and, what I fear the most,
Perhaps still closer custody—

LADY DOUGLAS.

Alas!

They dare not sure proceed to take her life?

BETON.

Oh, no! 'twou'd rouse all Europe; shake all
thrones;
Loosen the deepest-rooted monarchies:—
They dare not think of it—you see they're gone
For farther counsel to the Star Chamber.

LADY DOUGLAS.

'Tis time t' attend the Queen, Heav'n guard her
still!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Mary's Chamber, Fotheringay Castle.**Enter Lady Douglas to the Queen.*

MARY.

Douglas! come hither Douglas! sit by me;
 Thou art the constant solace of my woes.
 I am almost worn out with grief and care;
 And, as you sometimes hint, I plainly find
 My health is much impair'd—I had not strength
 Or spirits to do justice to my cause
 Before this Court.—

LADY DOUGLAS.

Oh, my royal Mistress!
 How cou'd you condescend to plead to them?

MARY.

Alas! too confident in innocence,
 I undervalued human treachery;
 Suffer'd my ears to catch the specious sound
 Of Hatton's soft persuasive eloquence;
 Who, faire and false as Belial, from his tongue
 Shed manna, which beguil'd my silly heart,
 ' Brought me to compromise my dignity,
 ' By condescensions, which the petulance
 ' Of rancorous Burleigh's bitter enmity,
 ' Had ne'er effected.'—Oh, accursed fraud!

LADY DOUGLAS.

Fraud! aye, and open force; did they not seize
 Your papers, burst your cabinet, and rob,
 Aye, basely pilfer all your little hoard,
 The remnant of your treasure, which you sav'd
 To pay your poor domestics, and for acts
 Of charity?—

MARY.

A TRAGEDY.

61

MARY.

But that, you know, of late
Has been prohibited; because 'twas found
One still remaining source of happiness.

LADY DOUGLAS.

Infernal, unexampled infamy!
Yes, my dear Mistress, 'twas a cruelty
More felt by you than by the poor themselves
Who lost your daily charity.—

MARY.

Douglas!

Forfaken as I am, I cou'd not think
That my own Secretary wou'd have turn'd
Against his Mistress; and, in that, where he,
Above all others, knew me innocent:
I never much esteem'd the man; but yet
I did not think the viper wou'd have bit
The hand that fed it.—' He first came to me
' From my poor uncle, the late Cardinal,
' My uncle was the prop of all my counsels;
' Alas! he's gone; and Charles, my brother, now
' No longer reigns in France—he too is lost!
' His end was wretched and unnatural.'—
And for my son, my only child, he reigns
In Scotland, patient of a mother's wrongs;
' I am forbid to hear from him.'—Alas!
Had he the heart or spirit of a man—

Enter Beton.

BETON.

Pardon the messenger of dismal news!

LADY DOUGLAS. [*Aside.*]

Oh, me, what now?—

BETON.

62 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

BETON.

And, oh, prepare to hear
The heaviest tidings—

MARY.

I've been long prepar'd.

BETON.

Your own misfortunes you have ever born
With fortitude, but other's sufferings—

MARY.

What others? speak! alas, I guess—

BETON.

Too well

I fear—

MARY.

The Duke?—

BETON.

His troubles are no more;
‘He rests in peace, beyond the tyrant’s sway,
‘Where mortal envy cannot reach: alas!’
Poor man! he fell a victim to his love;
His dying breath still bless’d you.—

MARY.

Oh, just Heavens!

‘Since it has pleas’d you thus to visit him
‘For my offences—let my prayers ascend
‘In his behalf—yet stay; he’s risen now,
‘Whence he looks down with pity and contempt
‘On worldly cares; views with serenity
‘Her despicable malice.’—Oh, mean wretch!
Why dar’d you not let fall your vengeance here?
He dies at last in my defence!—to save
This poor forlorn existence—Fie upon’t!

Why

A TRAGEDY. 63

Why lingers yet my breath? — Out, out, for
shame!

Seek the wide air, and catch my Norfolk's soul.

SCENE III. *The Hall.*

Enter Beton, meeting Sir Amias Paulet.

BETON. [*Afide.*]

Paulet arrived! — What is your pleasure here?

SIR A. PAULET.

I am about to seek your Mistress, Sir. —

BETON.

The Queen is ill at ease, and needs repose.

SIR A. PAULET.

Sir, I have business to communicate —

BETON.

Concerning her? —

SIR A. PAULET.

Aye, very nearly too. —

BETON.

From Westminster? —

SIR A. PAULET.

From the Star Chamber, Sir;
No less than that her Secretaries both
Have now confess'd the plot, and sworn to it.

BETON.

Oh, perjur'd, venal slaves! They never dar'd
Confront her with these murderous lies — the sight
Of injur'd innocence had choak'd their speech.

SIR

64 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

SIR A. PAULET.

Say rather their repentance has produc'd
Full proof to justify the course of law.

BETON.

Who, but a judge determin'd to convict,
Wou'd credit those whose faith is forfeited
By plain, avow'd desertion of their trust?
'Twere a judicial murder—the worst crime
This sinful world has known: first, as the Judge
Is, for his purity and wisdom, plac'd
In high authority, and charg'd to guard
Fair innocence; then, as the sufferer
By such injustice, feels disgrace and shame
Added to all the bitterness of death.

SIR A. PAULET.

Is she, who claims protection, above law?

BETON.

Call you imprisonment protection? Oh!
Mere subterfuges, worthy of your Queen;
This last exploit of bribing evidence
Was an achievement suiting her great power,
Her riches, her wise Ministers—Oh, shame!

SIR A. PAULET.

Is this the language, Sir, of Mary Stuart,
Late Queen of Scotland? she shall answer for it;
I must proceed to her.—

BETON.

Mean, servile wretch!
Paulet! if you're a man, some future day
You'll not refuse atonement for these words.

SCENE

SCENE IV. *The Queen's Chamber.*

*Queen Mary, Lady Douglas, Two Maids, and
Sir Amias Paulet.*

MARY.

Are these your orders, Sir, before my face
To take my canopy?—

SIR A. PAULET.

No doubt they are.

MARY.

And you're instructed thus t' insult a Queen?

SIR A. PAULET.

I am instructed to consider you
As one attempting to destroy a Queen.

MARY.

'Tis false, by all that's sacred! Heav'n well knows
I wou'd not touch the meanest life on earth,
Much less the Queen's, for all that she enjoys,
All her great empire—No; on my royal word.—

SIR A. PAULET.

Henceforth, no more let convicts idly dream
Of forfeit titles—Farewell, Mary Stuart!

MARY.

Thinks she that such indignities degrade
My native titles? tell her she doth fix
Eternal shame, contempt, and ridicule
On her own name, by these low practices;
And say, tho' she may rob me of my life,
Mary will die the lawful Queen of Scots.

[Exit Sir A. Paulet.

K

LADY

66 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

LADY DOUGLAS.

Oh, my dear Mistress! heed not such base men,
They are beneath your care.—

MARY.

They harass me;
My spirits are worn out; I'll lay me down;
[*Mary reclines on her Sopha.*
Methinks soft music wou'd compose my nerves:
'I once had music at command,'—but, oh!
The lute's unstrung that smoothe'd the brow of
care;
Cold is the tongue that charm'd with living fire.

LADY DOUGLAS.

'Allow your faithful maid to try her voice.
[*Here Queen Mary's Lamentations should be
sung by Lady Douglas or one of the Maids.*

MARY.

'These plaintive strains bring quiet to mind,
'Balm to my troubled soul; they sooth my
'woes,
'Recall old times, and tell me what I was.
'Douglas! while yet I was in infancy,
'The cruel father of this cruel Queen
'Ask'd me in marriage, from my native land,
'For his own son; and failing in his suit,
'Wag'd war with Scotland: afterwards, you
'know,
'It was my fate to mount the throne of France,
'As consort of young Francis; on whose death,
'(Oh, ever lamentable, fatal loss!)
'I stay'd in France till, by the jealousy
'And cruel arts of Catherine, I was driven
'To seek my own hereditary crown.—

Doest

Doeſt thou remember how reluctantly
I left the gay and ſprightly Court of France ?

LADY DOUGLAS.

Aye, as 'twere yeſterday—I ſee you ſtill,
Fix'd like a ſtatue at the veſſel's ſtern,
With eyes intent upon the Gallic ſhore,
Watching each leſſening object, till the coaſt,
The wide-extended coaſt, and diſtant ſpires
Of Calais, glittering in the evening ſkies,
Alone remain'd in view; darkneſs came on,
And tears inceſſant; till the morning calm
Gave one faint glimpe of the departing ſcene:
Oh, then you beat your breaſt and wav'd your
hand,
While intermingled tears and ſobs, half choak'd
Your ill-articulated, laſt adieu.

MARY.

Oh, what a change for a young Queen of France!
From all the pleaſures of that ſplendid Court,
To the moroſe, ſour aſpect, the dull cant,
And furious zeal, of Scotland's puritans!

LADY DOUGLAS.

What barbarous, fanatic inſolence!

MARY.

Oh, I was deſtin'd in my native land
To heavier ills; to Darnley's cruelty;
Murray's ambition; Morton's treachery,
My ſubjects' mean deſertion of their Queen;
Their baſe revolt; and baſer calumnies.

LADY DOUGLAS.

The time ſhall come when the impartial world
Shall nobly vindicate your injur'd fame.

68 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

MARY.

Long since, dear Douglas, I've resign'd this world,
With all its vanities, and fix'd my heart
On Heav'n alone—Ah, me! who's this?—

Enter Davison.

LADY DOUGLAS.

Who art thou?

DAVISON.

One whose approach forbodes a blacker storm
Than e'er struck terror in the human breast.

MARY.

Know you this man?—

LADY DOUGLAS.

No; but I fear he brings
Fresh insults and new rigours.—

MARY.

Whence come you

DAVISON.

From the Queen's self; who most reluctantly,
Nor without many bitter figs and tears—

LADY DOUGLAS.

Tears of a crocodile.—

DAVISON.

I say, with tears
The Queen dispatch'd me, to announce the fate,
The fate contain'd within this warrant.—

[Delivering a Warrant.]

MARY.

Ha! *[reading the Warrant.]*

Enter Beton. — A Drum is heard beating a slow March.

B E T O N.

Oh, mercy! Heavens! alas, my Queen! I fear
Some dreadful fate; the Earls of Shrewsbury
And Huntingdon, attended by the guards,
Are at the castle gate.—

L A D Y D O U G L A S.

Ah, here they come!
Th' array of death! Ah! is it come to this?

*Enter Shrewsbury and Huntingdon, with Guards,
Executioner, &c.*

S H R E W S B U R Y.

The painful office which I now perform—

M A R Y.

I know your business.—

S H R E W S B U R Y.

Ah! know you, alas!
With what dispatch we're order'd to proceed?

L A D Y D O U G L A S.

Oh, murder! murder! cruel murderers, stay!

M A R Y.

Patience, my child! I did not think, I own,
My sister Queen wou'd have proceeded thus;
But if my body cannot sustain one blow,
My soul deserves not those eternal joys
In Heav'n my holy faith has promis'd me.

H U N T I N G D O N.

'Tis your accursed faith that seals your doom;
While

70 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

While you're on earth, there is no surety
For our true faith—

M A R Y.

What do I hear? good Heav'n!
Say you that I'm to suffer for my faith?
Oh, happy and glad tidings! glorious news!
' Repeat that word, thou messenger of joy!
' Angels descending from their blest abodes,
' Cou'd not have hail'd me with more welcome
 ' sounds.—
' Then it hath pleas'd the gracious Heav'ns at last
' To hear my prayers, and recompense my woes.'
Now, in one blessed moment, all my pain,
All my long sufferings are exchanged for bliss.
These ears have heard me thus proclaim'd a saint;
And Mary's, aye, poor Mary's weeping eyes
Have liv'd to see her crown of martyrdom.—
I'll make short preparation; and mean while,
Let all my servants be in readiness;
And bid my confessor to follow me.

L A D Y D O U G L A S.

We will obey—

[*Exit Lady Douglas, with the Maids.*]

H U N T I N G D O N.

This may not be allow'd;
We came not here to see our holy faith
Mock'd by the tricks and superstitious forms
Of Papal ceremony—Your confessor
Must not approach—

M A R Y.

Sir, I was born to reign;
I am your Mistress' kinswoman; like her,
Descended from King Henry—Dowager

OF

Of France, and Scotland's lawful Queen; as such,
I pray you, treat me ——

[Exit Mary to her Oratory.]

B E T O N.

Inhuman tyranny,
That wou'd extend its barbarous cruelties
Beyond the grave!—

S H R E W S B U R Y.

We may not violate
Our strict commands—

B E T O N.

Heav'n will remember them:
You are, then, order'd to refuse a Queen,
In the last moments of her life, those rites,
That consolation, which is always given
To the most harden'd, graceless criminals,
That e'er insulted justice, or brought shame
On human nature?—

H U N T I N G D O N.

Nay, urge not that; for, lo!
A pious prelate now attends without
To offer his assistance—I'll propose—

[Huntingdon offers to go towards the Oratory.]

B E T O N.

If you're not lost to all humanity,
Disturb not her last meditations thus.

[Stopping Huntingdon.]

*Enter Lady Douglas with four Maids, a Physician,
and an Almoner—Beton places himself with them.*

H U N T I N G D O N.

Why are you all assembled here?—

L A D Y

72 MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

LADY DOUGLAS.

You see
The sad remains of her poor family.

HUNTINGDON.

You are, at best, but useless, idle shew;
Perhaps employ'd for superstitious use;
Retire!—

LADY DOUGLAS.

You cannot mean to hinder us
From this last, wretched office?—

HUNTINGDON.

Nay, begone!

BETON.

Infernal savage!—

LADY DOUGLAS.

Yet have mercy, Lords!
Oh! you are far more gentle, Shrewsbury!
Drive not her few, poor, faithful maids from her;
Let them receive her blessing, and behold
Their dying Mistress' looks, and close her eyes.
In pity, nay, in decency, comply;
Is't fit the person of a royal Queen
Shou'd lie a mangled and unheeded corse,
Without her maids to shroud those precious limbs,
Which kneeling Princeesses were proud to adorn?

SHREWSBURY.

'Tis not in nature to resist the claim.

*Enter Mary from her Oratory, dressed gorgeously,
with a Cross and Beads.*

MARY.

This world to me is as a thing that's past;

A bur-

A burden shaken off—The retrospect
 Exhibits nothing but a wearisome
 And tedious pilgrimage—What is to come
 Opens a scene of glory to my eyes:
 Therefore with joy I hasten to begin
 This course of triumph — Oh! my faithful
 friends!

Ye all—all of you, my poor followers,
 Have sacrific'd your days to share my woes.
 Now let me ask forgiveness for the past;
 Pardon my many negligences!—

LADY DOUGLAS.

Oh!

Thus, on our knees, we crave your blessing all.

MARY.

Yes, I will bless you with my latest breath;
 'Tis all I have to give; except, perchance,
 Some trifles, which I here bequeath among you.
[Delivering her Will.]

Beton, accept this ring—take that—And thou!

*[Giving a Ring to Beton, and her Physician,
 and her Almoner.]*

These tokens may remind you of my love.—

Come hither, all my maids! *[The Maids rise and
 approach.]* Farewel, sweet friends.

[Mary kisses each of them.]

We soon shall meet.—Come, Douglas! let me
 bind

Thine arm with this my bracelet; that so oft
 As you behold it, you may think on me.

[Clasping her in her Arms.]

• Now let me hold thee thus—Nay, do not weep
 • That I'm translated from this scene of care

L

• To

- ‘ To endless joy—Once more farewell!—lead on!
 [Mary makes a Sign for the Procession to go on,
 and is proceeding, when Melvin, an old
 Man with grey Locks, throws himself at her
 Feet, in Tears.

‘ M E L V I N.

- ‘ Oh, mercy! mercy, Heaven! alas, my Queen!
 ‘ That I shou’d live to such an age for this,
 ‘ To see this sight, and carry back this tale!’

M A R Y.

- ‘ Melvin! my faithful servant, Melvin, here!
 ‘ In my last moments—They have kept thee long
 ‘ Out of thy Mistress’ sight—thou comest in time
 ‘ For her poor blessing—Good old man, return;
 ‘ Commend me to my son—tell him I’ve done
 ‘ No prejudice to Scotland’s crown—tell him
 ‘ My latest words were those of Scotland’s Queen.”

[Melvin tries to speak, and is unable.

Poor soul, thy griefs have choak’d thy speech!
 Adieu!

Bear witness all, tell it throughout the world,
 But chiefly to my family in France,
 That I die firmly in their holy faith!
 And you, ye Ministers from England’s Queen!
 Tell her, she hath my pardon; and relate,
 That, with my dying breath, I do beseech
 Her kindness to my servants; and request
 Safe conduct for them into France; that done,
 I’ve naught to ask, but that my poor remains
 May be bestow’d in Lorrain, or in France,
 Where I may hope for pious obsequies;
 For here the tombs of my progenitors
 Are all profan’d—Remember my requests!—
 Now lead me on in triumph, till I gain
 Immortal joys, and an immortal reign.

4 AP 54
 F I N I S.

E P I L O G U E.

Written by the AUTHOR,

And spoken by Mrs. SIDDONS.

WERE you not told, before the play began,
Our Author ventur'd on a daring plan?
A tale of woe, a deep historic Play
Giv'n in an age so debonnair and gay.
Was this a place to set up a defence,
And talk of injur'd Mary's innocence?—
Of late discoveries, drawn from dates and words,
Old rotten parchments, musty, dull records?
No—all is now for tinsel, show!—this age
Turns a deaf ear—but keenly views the stage!
The Tragic Muse, nay, all the sisters nine,
Are now eclips'd—Aladin's lamp doth shine!
Exulting o'er their tomb—now *boxers* *spar*!
And beaux, in raptures, envy every scar!
Learning and wit were once esteem'd, and then
The stage produced Ben Johnson—*now*, Big Ben!
Shakespeare make room for Humphries!—that's the way
To bring the men of fashion to the play!

But to our Bard—How shall we judge his case?
Who scorns the unities of time and place.
Critics, what say ye?—Must he sue for peace
To wits of modern France or ancient Greece?
The great Voltaire has told us, that a play
Should be within one house, and in one day—
But in one evening, how can it be right,
To represent the morning, noon, and night?
To hail Aurora, swear the sun-beam glows,
While these vile lamps still flare beneath my nose.

And

And as to place—deception's all in vain—
We've known all night, that this is Drury Lane.
Thus English Johnson's sterling wit and sense
Treats this French rule, as a poor, weak pretence
To cloak their narrow genius—an expedient
To make their fable, like themselves, obedient.

When action, uniform in every part,
Guides the clear tale directly to the heart,
In vain dramatic pedants may combine
The free-born Muse, by weakning, to refine,
Whene'er she mounts, their damp, cold veil to fling,
Or clip the master feather of her wing.
No; let the Tragic Muse range far and wide,
Bind not in chains the passions' faithful guide;
Let the full heart expand, and seek relief
From the sweet luxury of virtuous grief.
May no stern critic or false shame control
This noble weakness of each generous soul:
For with the tender heart alone you'll find,
The highest spirit and the firmest mind.

